CHAPTER II..

"In the Demon's Power."

ley toward tracing the man who had murdered his father was the quadru-pling of the reward the New York Examiner had offered for a solution

Taking his slain father's place at th

the campaign in person, spending thou-

sands of dollars weekly in search of

But as the hunt increased in fervor

one night at the Crimson Stain den.

"I told you to meet Robert Clay-"because

ley there the other day, too."
"Good," vouchsafed Pierre, "Did you
make Clayton fail in love with you

That was the very easiest bit of

Well, if we can't bring him over

Stanley and Clayton. She was asking

Clayton to paint her portrait as a sur-

ton's studio. And Harold Stanley

te," said La Rue. Robert Clayton's studio was on

ts, and was sorting some

as the studio door opened. saw Vanya Tosca's sup

o'clock to-morrow at

He glanced up in expectation

supple

doorway, his look

figure

birthday next

prise for her father's

arranging his easel

mixing

annovance.

room, asking timidly:

Vanya. But this is

ahead and do it.

'Delilah."

late, or anything?"

ting is for 3 o'clock to-morrow.

"Oh!" she cried, in childlike disap-pointment; then—"Is she prettier than

"She is-she is different," he evaded.

"She is small and slender, with big

dark eyes and masses of dark hair

pouted Vanya, her rich voice breaking.

'And you'd rather paint her than me."
"Nonsense," Clayton reassured her.

you'd rather spend this beauti-

No one on earth is prettier than

"Then she is prettier than I am."

month.

he was staring at me like a sick calf."

Then you can bring him over?

I told you to?

Clayton

of the Crimson Stain Mystery.

The first step taken by Harold Stan-

The Crimson Stain Mystery

Novelized by Albert Payson Terhune from Consolidated Motion-Picture Triumph.

(Copyright, 1916, by Consolidated Film Corporation.)

Everything you read here to-day you may see in moving pictures this week at the Victor Theater.

CHAPTER I. The Brand of Satan.

The big Montrose house at Riverdale seemed to have awakened from a long doze of gloom. For six months it had been shuttered and all but deserted. its blinds were up. There were fresh flowers in the window bowls and and face and rent his clothes. and gayety in the very atmosphere of the place.

But now, in a breath, everything was by the force of the chair's impact, hanged. Florence, his eighteen-year- Almost at once Stanley's outflung old daughter, had come home from a six-month visit to a school chum in man who was stealing up toward him the West, and instantly her bright through the dense blackness.

Harold sprang in and grappled the now. What would we be without its.

"You certainly do surprise, me. Why, are you working? Has your father cast you off?"
"No. He's cast me on. On to the pay roll of the New York Examiner. I have been there five months as a cffb reporter. When I finished college dad had a real Dutch uncle talk with me. Among several hundred other remarks of general interest, he said to me: "Son. I've spent thirty years in building up the Examiner. I bought it when it was down and out. I've made it the most powerful newspaper in New York — perhaps in America. I did it for the sake of my only son. Now my only son can either be a loafer and squanson can e can take off his coat and pitch in and learn the business from the bottom up and make himself fit to carry on this great work when I am dead. Which comes shall it be? I leave the choice to you. other So I pitched in. It seemed the only light.

thing for a white man to do."
"Good for you" applauded Florence. over-cordinly.
"I think it's fine of you."
"Good evenir

stery? It has a growsome sound." Here's the story in just a mouthful words." he explained. "Four months go Cyrus Q. Ferrand-the banker, you den was found murdered in his His safe was looted, and the murderer got clean away. The autop-

"The odd feature of the case," went on Harold, "was the way he had been choked. The marks on his throat "As I climbed late the form showed that the murderer's hands were dow," said Harold. "He switched off long and slender and abnormally the light. But he turned an electric known to the liu-jitsu experts of Japan It paralyzes the tim's spinal cord and makes him help-less to resist; even while his breath is being shut off. It is a grip that not one 'strong-arm man' in 10.000 not one 'strong-arm man' in 10,000 fell for a fraction of a knows anything about. At least not upper part of his face.'

"But don't the police--" "The police worked on the case for all they were worth, but they couldn't seen. I'm not sure I'd recognize the technical result will find a thing. Parish—he's the great face again. But I'd recognize the eyes with the formula in my str international detective that the city anywhere on earth. has hired to clear up this case—spent "days in trying to get at a clew, but ley.

"Spent 'days' on it?" she interposed. Why not weeks or months? Surely was worth that much trouble. Why

did he stop at 'days'?"
"Because," replied Harold, "nine days later Marcus Krug, the big jewwas found murdered in exactly the same way, in his private office at the back of his store."

"Two such murders in New York in four months?" she murmured, with a "And no one brought to jus-It doesn't seem possible tice. It doesn't seem possible: "Two such murders?" he said in sudden vehemence. "No. Not two Four-

Fourteen?" she gasped. he repeated

"Fourteen!" the last four months no less than four-teen men of wealth in New York have found strangled by just that weird throat grip. And in every case the murderer has escaped with his plunder." "And no clew?"

"Yes and no. One clew, perhaps, but such a fantastic clew that we can't get any sense out of it." What is it?

"When old Raoul Beautolais, the restaurant man, was killed his brother found him a moment or two before he was quite dead. The murderer been frightened away. As Beaujolais died he managed to pant out the words, 'Crimson Stain!' That was all. Just those two words."

A cry of stark terror from Florence Montrose interrupted him. She had caught convulsively at his arm. at a house they chanced to be passing. Against one of these shades a strange group was silhouetted—a group of three

One of these figures stood a little from the two others, as if coldly directing operations. The remaining

Then Harold Stanley understood, One of these two men was strangling the other, who writhed helpless in his grip. The third was issuing directions for

e murder.
"It's Mr. Hanna!" gasped Florence. great real estate operator up ed on the door.
I recognize his profile. They're doctor folded the

killing him. He-"
"Quick!" commanded Harold, shakback into the drawer

ink off his momentary daze of horror.
"We met a policeman on the black be"We met a policeman on the black beman of smugly, servile mien—opened the street hedge and crossed the narsprang away from her, vaulted

the jagged opening, Harold saw the silhouette of the third man dart away to one side of the room. The next instant the lights were switched off.

In through the broken window Harold thrust his body, heedless of the splintered glass that cut at his hands

As he set foot inside the pitch-dark a chill. room a pocket flashlight's rays smote blindingly athwart his eyeballs. At the same instant, Harold's groping Please!" for a half year Dr. Montrose had dwelt here alone, except for his silent-footed assistant, Felix. Here, day and night, the doctor had toiled in his labonight, the doctor had toiled in his labonight. The lens of the spotlight. The lens of the spotlight lens of the spotlight. night, the doctor had toiled in his laboratory, tirelessly, perfecting the experiments to which he had devoted himself since his wife's death.

But now, in a breath, everything was

man who was stealing up toward him through the dense blackness.

Harold sprang in and grappled the now. What would we be without it?

What would we become?

the West, and instantly her bright the wist of the latter was a strong and active man and fought with the Montrose glared at them for an instant, then, with a hopeless sigh, surrendered. He motioned them across the laboratory of an intricate-looking machine at which they had been glancing with furtive longing ever since they entered the room.

Taking up two metal wrist clasps he fastened them about Vanya's wrists, then attached two more to Tanner's, then attached two more to Tanner's, then attached two more to Tanner's, then attached two more to Tanner's then attached two more to Tanner's then attached two more to Tanner's then attached two more to Tanner's. The metal clasps were connected to long cylinders from whose other end lowers.

Harold, panting from his exertion, spun about, with arms expanded, to grope for the second assassin. As he did so his foot struck the inertily quivering body of a man who lay sprawling on the floor in front of him.

With a thrill of revulsion Harold, Florence ran down the steps to greet. With a thrill of revulsion Harold. His hand fell upon a lever. But he

hind.

"Doing nothing!" he pouted. "I'm the possess little citizen in a burg of 6. bed themselves about the young man's muscular neck, seeking and immediate you working? Has your father set you off?"

hind.

A set of long, ice-cold fingers wrapped along the cylinder wires.

The effect on Tanner and Vanya was miraculous. Their drooping bodies all at once become alert and vibrant with a concept for money. I did to stop the noise his paper was nakely out of the top of his spine, directly below to the top of his spine, directly below the base of the brain.

He drew the terrified girl from the room as he spoke and led her down the hall to the front door. On the threshold they almost collided with a threshold they almost collided with a lindirectly were caused by me."

He laid aside his fountain pen. Idly

"Hello, Parrish," said Harold, not "Good evening, Mr. Stanley," return-

death and no clew"

flash-lamp on me. The glare dazzled me and left him invisible. I threw a flash-lamp on me. The glare dazzled can this drug I have evolved.

me and left him invisible. I threw a chair at the light and knocked it out mented on four hospital patients. of hitting the floor released the battery

sh.
"No. He was no one I had ever "I tried the experiment on the four

eyes are red." answered Stan-'Crimson Stain.' He saw-"

Parrish, breaking of men. sneered roar of noisily derisive laughhunting up fancy clews, stained eyes, hey? And y And you saw all that in the time it took a flashlight ray to flit across his face? It's the silliest drivel I ever heard.

In a roomy uptown building on New York's East Side lived Tanner. On the night of the Hanna murder and an hour or so after the crime's next entry; discovery, several of these visitors "March 22, 1915.—What abominable drifted, one by one, into the den from an alley entrance. All but one were men. The exception was Vanya Tosca, a woman who, for very obvious reason, had long been named "the Vam- developed my four patients into the

One man was evidently in high au- awakened and stimulated and intensithority among the little group, to fied a hundredfold the crime instincts judge by the almost cringing defer- of these four people on whom I have cuces bestowed on him by the rest. He was dark, sinuous, tigerish, with with a gaze as hypnotic as a snake's. He claimed to be French by birth and called himself "Pierre La Rue." No I had one knew his real name.

the report. Tanner and I went to die.

Hanna's as we planned. We got in.
easily enough. Hanna was in the cha He was so old and that I had decided to let Tanmyself. He'd been plaguing me to let him try the grip ever since I taught it to him. It was a false move. For he bungled. They struggled all over the room, and they got between the light and the window shade. A man smashed in through the window and threw Tanner against the wall over the room. threw Tanner against the wall, crippling his shoulder. I got the grip on the fellow; and I was finishing him when I heard the police whistle. We shoved what cash we could find into

Hand over, Tanner. following afternoon, From drawer in his desk he had just taken a copy of the Examiner and had be-gun to read it, when a low rap soundoberator up ed on the door. Almost guiltily, the file. They're doctor folded the paper and thrust it

"Come in." he called.

the door. "It is two of the the 'experiment stammered the servant, "I told them you had left word you clenched fist he smote the heavy plate-glass pane of the window. The pane won't go away. They say they—" bashed in. As he leaped upward into "I'll see them," ordered Montrose, a

shadow as of physical pain distorting his knees beside his father, "Dad!" Robert Clayton, rushing out for aid, encountered Dr. Montrose coming down-

Dr. Montrose clasped his bowed head between his hands and groaned aloud. Then, rising to his feet, he squared his bent shoulders and a look of high resolve came into his haggard face. "Doctor!" yelled the artist. "Mr. Stanley is dead! Murdered!" He crossed the library to the reception hall. The visitors were Vanya Tosca and Tanner. They stood eyeing Dr. Montrose with the look a hungry dog might bestow on a butcher's cart. They were depressed in looks and manner and seemed more than half ill.

Harold Stanley got slowly to his feet and looked down at the father he had so devotedly loved. Then, as solemnly as though he were repeating a vow before a priest, he raised his hand and seemed more than half ill. Harold Stanley got slowly to his feet

nd seemed more than nan in.

"Well," Dr. Montrose sharply broks he momentary silence, "what do you murderer if I have to track him to the farthest ends of the earth. So help me,

replied Tanner.

"And we must have it," added Vanya "You've both had far too much al-ready," said Montrose, in stern deci-sion. "And you'll get no more."

At his words Vanya winced Tan "You can't mean that, doctor" ex-

said Tanner, eagerly, "I did am La Rue. But it wasn't our

Yours! You're the cause was yours.

shoulders proclaimed the athlete, even as the broad forehead and full eyes denoted the thinker and the firm-molded ed jaw the man of action.

Florence ran down the steps to greet him.

"At last you have come," she eager ye exclaimed. "I had thought Harold Stanley had forgotten his schoolgirl friend in his busy career of doing nothing."

did so his foot struck the inertly quivering the foot in front of him.

With a thrill of revulsion Harold over the corpse of the strangled Hanna. He sought to recover his balance with a deft turn of his shoulders and a back-ward swing of his outstretched arms and some one seized him from behind.

And some one seized him from behind.

omer and Harold recognized each other at a glance, even in that dim light.

He had aside his fountain pen, follower and harold recognized each he ran his fingers through the diary's pages as if searching for an earlier entry. Presently on the first page he entry. Presently on the first page he found what he sought. Half aloud he read:

think it's fine of you."

"Good evening, Mr. Stanley," returned the detective of the detective of the detective of the station that there's been another the station that there's been a cans the fifteenth in four months."

"This one is like all the rest, I supsee." hazarded Parrish. "Choked to ath and no clew."

"Choked to the only safe process for administering it. The formula for this drug "No," contradicted Harold, with sudden clation, "there is a clew, this time. A real one. I've felt the murderer's hands around my own throat.

time. A real one. I've felt the murderer's hands around my own throat. And I've seen his eyes. And," he continued, impressively, "I know why old Mr. Beaujolais spoke of a 'Crimson Stain." I've seen that stain."

"What?" cried both Parrish and Florence in a single breath.

"As I climbed into the front window," said Harold. "He switched off the light. But he turned an electric content of the point of turning a mediocre intelligence into sublime genius. I believe I can administer it to a half-vited illiterate and transform him into a Shakespeare, a Napoleon or a Washington. No lifelong training and the light. But he turned an electric content of the point of turning a mediocre intelligence into sublime genius. I believe I can administer it to a half-vited illiterate and transform him into a Shakespeare, a Napoleon or a Washington. No lifelong training and the light. But he turned an electric content of the point of turning a mediocre intelligence into sublime genius. I believe I can administer it to a half-vited illiterate and transform him into a Shakespeare, a Napoleon or a Washington. No lifelong training and the light. But he turned an electric content of the point of turning a mediocre intelligence into sublime genius. I believe I can administer it to a half-vited illiterate and transform him that a Shakespeare, a Napoleon or a Washington. No lifelong training and transform him the point of turning a mediocre intelligence into sublime genius. I believe I can administer it to a half-vited illiterate and transmis-stom in the human system.

"I know when he is going to," she made ready answer. "He is to be there at 3 o'clock to-morrow afternoon."

"Good," approved Pierre, one more adding: "You are certain?"

"Yes," answered Vanya. "I went to-dow," and the point of turning a mediocre intelligence into sublime genius. I believe I can administer it to a half-vited illiterate and transform him the point of turning a mediocre intelligence into be provided in the point of turning a mediocre intelligence into be provide

ean this drug I have evolved. me, at random, from various life. I did not tell them the catch and put out the light—its rays fell for a fraction of a second on the upper part of his face."

"You recognized him?" cried Par-

face again. But I'd recognize the eyes with the formula in my strong box), wildest hopes. Their ley. "A flery crimson. As if they had wonderful to note. All of the four been stained with blood. I believe brightened at once in looks and in that is what Beaujolais meant by the mental power. They seemed like members of a new and vastly superior race

Pierre La Rue's gratitude was pa-thetic. In him, more than in any of astonishing. It has made another man of him. A wonderful man! there are no heights to which raise him. He dominates them all (even myself-to my amusement and surprise). A remarkable genius!"

The doctor sighed and turned to the thing I have discovered? Where are priceless gift to mankind? Instead heaven-inspired geniuses, my drug has

tried it. (Pierre La Rue is a devil!) was dark, sinuous, tigerish, with strange and unforgetable face and bent them all to his will, has done the same to me. When the drug is in his brain he is a peerless master of men. I cannot resist him. His will power I cannot resist him. His will crushes mine to do his bidding. as wax in his hands. If only I might

As Jerome Stanley and the doctor the chatted, a light explosion was heard; and Stanley left the room to investigate. He started up the stairs and toward ner do the job, instead of doing it the laboratory, from whence the sound myself. He'd been plaguing me to let

spoken. There was a stient satisfied wills. Montrose stood staring straight wills. Montrose stood staring straight Ten minutes later Florence rose from

the piano. "My dog Chic has learned a new trick! I'll show you," she exclaimed as she dashed from the library across the reception hall and into the diningroom

Jerome Stanley lay across the table. Behind him crouched Pierre la Rue, his fingers encircling Stanley's throat. At sight of Florence the slayer loosened his hold and sprang back through a Jerome Stanley was stone dead. Re-

gaining herself. gaining herself, Florence screamed. Harold, rushing forward ast Florence, saw about the lifeless man's throat the hideously familiar finger marks of the to the door. Crimson Stain's victims.

care so much-I-I-

Her self-control gave way. broke into a fit of hysterical weeping. Her outflung arms clasped themselves spasmodically around the astonished Clayton's neck, holding him ton's neck, holding him moveless the straining intensity of their

clinging grasp. And before the dumfounded man could speak or stir, Tanner was upon

Darting into the studio behind Vanya, the Crimson Stain henchman waited only until the girl had securely seized Clayton in her strong, willowy arms. Then, carefully aiming his blow, arms. Then, carefully aiming his blow, arms. Then, carefully aiming his blow. Tanner brought down his revolver butt with all the trained force of his arm muscles upon the artist's left temple.

Clayton slumped to the polished floor duck the whirlwind of blows. In vain the sought to clinch or stand his ground. He was no match for the ground. He was no match for the ground.

Before Clayton's inert body had fairly struck the floor Tanner and Vanya were leaning above him deftly binding and gagging the senseless man. This achieved, they lifted the body, bore it across to a divan, thrust the divan forward a foot or two and dropped Clayton into the space between the divan back and the wall.

the murderer. In a calmly business-like fashion the young man was seek-ing to fulfill his oath to bring to jus-"We've no time to iwaste," said La tice the man who had killed his father Rue, coming into the studio from the Thanks to him, there was no man "The Montrose chauffeur didn't get my message. He's coming down the block now with Florence in the car a quarter of an hour ahead of time. I saw him from the hall winwere tinged with a deep red stain and that his fingers were long, slender and abnormally strong. dow.

> claimed Vanya in panic. there yet. We can't treat her as we've treated Clayton. At least," she hesitated, looking questionably at La Rue, "I suppose we can't."

> he decreed with no hesitation "Our strongest hold over Montrose is his daughter. But for her he'd turn desperate, instead of giving it to us. He might even kill himself. And there where would we be without the

A quick, soft footstep sounded in the hall outside. Tanner, at a gesture from Pierre, slipped out into the hall, and with the air of a departing visitor. even La Rue began to grow nervous. And he sent out a call for certain of his chosen lieutenants to meet him strolled past Florence Montrose and on toward the head of the stairs. There he paused and looked out of the window. In the street below stood Dr. Mont-To the Council came vanya Tosca, Tanner and the Masked Demon-Fierre nodded carelessly in response to their half-cringing salutations as he entered the big, bare room. Then he spoke briefly and to the point. rose's black car. Drawing up to the curb behind it was a gray roadster, from which Harold Stanley was just descending.

in obedience to a ward of La Rue's, glided into Clayton's dressing-room. Florence, at the same mo-ment, tapped at the studio door, "Come in," called La Rue.

She entered, and taking a step or two into the room, glanced around her. The door was shut and locked as she as noisy. And the police may blunder in on us some day, if he keeps on. So he must go. That's decided." did so. Standing with his back against it. Pierre La Rue faced her, smiling slightly, his arms folded. At sight of him, Florence gasped in He looked across to where Vanya

unbelieving horror. Again she was looking into the eyes which for weeks young Stanley's chum and goes often to the studio. Did you meet him?" had haunted her in nightmares, the eyes which had then been suffused by ne Crimson Stain. Now as she looked she saw La Rue's

did. I went to him last week to ask for work as a model. I happened to 'Dellish' eyes gradually redden, until they gleamed like hot coals. I came to see Mr. Clayton," she Delilah' painting he is at work on or the academy. He engaged me the minute he saw me. I met Harold Stan-

forced herself to stammer. "As he is not here, I won't wait."
"Miss Montrose," he said suavely, as, "Miss Montrose, he said suavely, as, after the first step, she paused irresolute and trembling, "you and I have met once before, I think, in your father's very beautiful old home at father's very beautiful old home at Riverside. On the night when Jerome Stanley had the misfortune to—to—" "To be murdered by you!" she flashed

That was the very easiest of or work you ever assigned me to," she laughed. "He is a susceptible boy. And before the end of the first sitting back, her dread of the man I saw you with your fingers about his The confident smile faded from Vanya's too-red lips.
"No," she said in chagrin; "I can't."
"Can't?" rapped Pierre, "why not?" throat-with your eyes as red as a rabid beast's!"

rabid beast's!"
"I thought so," he replied; "I was almost certain of it. But there was some slight doubt. You see, all women—especially in moments of fright—are "Can't?" rapped Pierre, "why not?"
"He isn't that sort—our sort," she not so observant as you. There was a chance you did not see my face long enough that night to remember. That he'll have to go under." Do you know when Stanley visits him?" is why I waited to-day to see if you would know me. I saw you did the moment you looked at me as you came in just now. I am sorry, but you leave

me no alternative." "What-what do you mean?" she

faltered, her throat sanded with ter-Miss Montrose," he redownstairs from the turned, speaking very slowly, almost and Florence Montrose solemnly "You are the only person in the outer world who has looked into the face of the man they call The Crimson Stain and lived. But it is not safe to let you go free with such dangerous knowledge.

She is to have the first sit-She screamed aloud in stark horror as he moved toward her.

Her scream penetrated the heavy oming to see the portrait started. He said he'd surely be there at 3."

Outer door and into the mill.

Harold Stanley, who was hurrying along the hallway.

Stanley broke into a run as he recop floor of the old-fashioned Park-Studio Building. Here, early the ognized Florence's voice, ran he called out reassuringly to her.
Out of the hallway should be reassuringly to her. mext afternoon, the artist was busily arranging his easel and his model chair with a view to the best light ef-

ran forward a figure launched itself upon him.

Tanner, realizing that but for himTanner, realizing that but for himquestion. "If you mean in the dressing-

of his own hands. spectancy changed to a slight frown He knew that by daylight and in fair combat, Pierre La Rue would be his change of expression, no physical match for so renowned Vanya moved slowly forward into the athlete as Stanley intent to attack Harold together from "Aren't you glad to see me? Am I behind while he should be in talk with Vanya, and Vanya, if possible, was to have aided them by twining "Too late?" he repeated, "why, you're not due here at all to-day. Your sit- her arms around Stanley as she had

> Thus handicapped, Harold would have been an easy victim for the "fi necklace," supplemented if need a tap from Tanner's pistol butt. Tanner, and Tanner alone,

save the day by holding him off until La Rue could dispose of Florence and come out to finish the killing of the man he had doomed to death. Tanner seized Harold by the throat from behind as he sprang.

commission to paint."

If you'd roll ily undeceived. y undeceived. Here was no flabby, middle-aged ful afternoon painting a silly portrait

"Ready?" she whispered, "He'll assailant by the throat and shoulder, probably follow me out here to beg and with a mighty heave of the arms and a doubling of the body, sent Tanner nodded, gripping a revolver clubwise by the barrel and tensing in front of him.

Tanner, shooting through space as Tell him to drive in a hurry to—"

into the room and had slipped be-tween Clayton and the nearest win-dow so that, facing her, his back was Harold Stanley, however, had no

only-it's only that you've made me "brace" of Tanner's foothold on the gling his watch and chain in one hand Sha

Forced to shift his grip in order to save his equilibrium. Tanner relaxed for an instant his underhold. In that noment Harold nimbly wriggled out of danger and, planting a blow source. of danger and, planting a blow square in the center of Tanner's face, sent him spinning backward and groping wildly at the sidewalls of the stairway to restore his balance.

Down the short hallway, toward the stair head, raged the unequal fight. For now Harold had a definite pur-

vard's last four years.

The time was summer. The day was The time was summer. The day was Saturday. Hence, practically every studio in the building was vacant. Such few tenants on lower floors as heard the conflict fancied it a goodnatured rampage on the part of some

of the building's gayer artists.

But the janitor, a cranky old fellow, awakened from his afternoon low, awakened from his afternoon snooze by the racket, drowsily decided that a riot was in progress in the upper stories. And he waddled forth, blinking, to find a policeman. And now, in his merciless drive, Haroid Stanley had backed his foe to the very summit of the state. the very summit of the stairs

flight went down steeply for fifteen steps to the landing below. teps to the landing below.

With a final sledge-hammer blow in the mouth, Stanley sent Tanner recl-ing backward over the stair edge. Down the flight of fifteen steps tumbled the beaten man, his head strik-ing the next lower landing with a bang that knocked his wits out of his thick skull.

Such men as Tanner do not lie unconscious for more than a very few seconds when hit by anything less formidable than a pile-driver.
But Harold did not stop to consider There lay his antagonist appar-

And the way was clear to Clayton's studio. With a sick dread in his heart, Harold dashed again toward the stu-dio door. The scream had not been

ently lifeless on the landing

repeated. Pierre La Rue had heard his hench-man attack Harold. His superquick wit had explained to him the whole Pierre La Rue had heard his hench-

wit had explained to him the whole situation in a flash. And he laid his plans with equal swiftness.

There was no longer a chance of killing Harold Stanley to-day. The best that La Rue could hope for would be to escape in safety and to prevent Florence Montrose from betraying him.

Accordingly, even as her lips were parted for a second try, for help, he instead at her and caught her by the street of the exportation. The readed no further exhortation. The parted for a second try for help, he imped at her and caught her by the shoulders, bringing his face close to

And the look in his red-stained less than a block ahead. a gasp of wordless horror.

Deep into the girl's frightened eyes he glared as though his terrible gaze would pierce to her very soul. All his

abnormally powerful mind and will-power were concentrated into that The race

flue's eyes and his uncanny will-power held Florence spellbound. Her widestaring gaze became dull. Her eyes glazed. Her tense body re-laxed and would have sank limply to

the floor had La Rue not upheld it. Crash! Harold's shoulder was the locked door. And the stout shivered under the impact. Va came running in from the dressing-room in panic at the sound.

A second thrust of the giant shoul-

ders and the heavy door leaped bodily on its hinges, while one of the thick panels split from top to bottom. La Rue picked up Florence's uncon-

scious body in his arms and ran to-ward the dressing-room. "There's a door in the room beyond that leads out into the hall!" Vanya cried to him as he passed her.

A third crash, with the whole weight

and power of Harold Stanley's body behind it, smashed the lock and the studio door flying inward. Harold burst into the room, all but

way.
A single sweeping glance showed Harold that the studio was deserted. He saw the open door leading into

On the threshold he all but contact with Vanya, who came strolling out from the dressing-room, yawning as shrank back from the blow. He swung himself on board into the swung himself on board into the On the threshold he all but collided

"Why, Mr. Stanley!" exclaims inya, "what on earth are you doing inya, "what on waiting for Mr. Clay-re?" Are you waiting for Mr. Clayhere? ton, as I am? I got tired waiting went into the next room for a nap. There's a couch there, and I was sleepy.

"Where is she?" demanded Harold, recovering from his bewilderment. "Is she there?'

self Harold must presently burst into the room and confront both Pierre and Florence, had taken matters into "I heard her cry out," he insisted, thrusting his way past her into the dressing-room.

> their followed him, laughing, from "I can explain the cry you heard," "Though ashamed of it, I had a bad dream and woke myself screaming and—"
> "It was not your voice!" he declared.

was hers, Whose?" she asked amusedly, He did not answer. He was utterly umfounded. He could have sworn he

had heard Florence Montrose scream His ring at the bell was answered by for help. He had burst in the door, Felix, the doctor's crafty-faced, silentfor help. He had burst in the door, and now-he was confronted by this could siniling, yawning model, who was very evidently the sole occupant of the the sole occupant of the fainted," ordered Harold. "I will take To mask his irritation from Vanya's

from behind as he sprang. But if mischlevous glance, he strode across he sought to duplicate La Rue's success in such maneuvers he was speed-wondering if the cry he had heard old, in might have come from some adjoin- he broke off, as Florence's to go on with our 'Delilah' picshe flared indignantly, "why, go I and do it. But after this you and strength of grip. Moreover, the land do it. But after this you and strength of grip. Moreover, the land do it. But after this you and strength of grip. Moreover, the land of the la s flared indignantly, "why, go he was, a second grip. Moreover, the been Florence's. He could have sworn to that.

Some other girl to pose for light was bad and Harold was in swift to that.

Pierre La Rue, meantime, had run to the stair.

ne other girl to pose for h.' I'm not coming back."
h.' I'm not coming back."
d. though, he was to the his temperamental modhis temperamental modhis temperamental modhis amazed by this petuwas amazed by this petuwas amazed by this petuwas amazed by this petuwas amazed by this petuhad the stair head, carrying the unconscious girl.
At the summit of the stairs he enhanced by this petuhad toward the stair head, carrying the unconscious girl.
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At the summit of the stairs he enhanced by this petuhad toward the stair head.

"She sees nothing." he said said."

"She sees nothing." he said said." Accustomed, though, he was to the vagaries of his temperamental models, Clayton was amazed by this petulant outburst. Before he could protest. Vanya had flounced out of the adopted a very simple and very effective trick known to all wrestlers and to most all-around athletes.

Throwing back his own arms, with
Throwing back his own arms, with
Thrusting the senseless girl into the stairs he endountered. Tanner, dazed, battered, bind first recovered his senses. La Rue gave Tanner no chance to explain. Thrusting the senseless girl into the stairs he endountered Tanner, dazed, battered, bind first recovered his enses. La Rue gave Tanner no chance to explain. Thrusting the senseless girl into the stairs he endountered Tanner, dazed, battered, who was ascending from the landing where he had first recovered his enses. La Rue gave Tanner no chance to explain. Thrusting the senseless girl into the stairs he endountered Tanner, dazed, battered, who was ascending from the landing where he had first recovered his enses. La Rue gave Tanner no chance to explain. Thrusting the senseless girl into the stairs he endountered Tanner, dazed, battered, who was ascending from the landing where he had first recovered his enses. La Rue gave Tanner no chance to explain. Thrusting the senseless girl into the stairs he endountered Tanner, dazed, battered, who was ascending from the landing where he had first recovered his enses. La Rue gave Tanner no chance to explain. Thrusting the senseless girl into the stairs he endountered. The summit of the stairs he endountered Tanner, dazed, battered, who was ascending from the landing where he had first recovered his enses. La Rue gave Tanner no chance to explain.

"If I go after her she'll make a scene in the hall just as Florence is arriving. I'll drop her a line to-night instead."

He must that missed Tanner's Jaw by barely an inch and landed heavily on his cheek bone. Half-dazed and with his head moment Vanya had run lightly back back back moment vanya had run lightly back back moment vanya had run lightly back moment vanya had run lightly back back moment vanya had run lightly back back back moment vanya had run lightly back back back moment vanya had run lightly back back moment vanya had run lightly back moment vanya had run lightly back b

ideausly familiar finger marks of the to the door.

"I'm sorry," she pleaded contribly.

"Dad!" he called wildly, dropping on "Please, I'm sorry I was cross. It's With a twist of his feet he broke the Running back up the stair the explanations must follow-explana- a new element burst into the moment ions that could not be made.

Running back up the stairs, dan- (To]

floor, and with a simultaneous heave as though he had just stolen them to one side, threw the man off his from some tenant, he collided with the

With a meeting to-night at \$:30 The policeman naturally gave chase. La Rue disappeared through the scuttle just too quickly for the policeman to seize his foot. He tried to clap down the scuttle, but the policeman thrust it aside and clambered out onto

the roof just as La Rue vaulted the low dividing parapet to the roof of the adjoining building. Drawing his nightstick, the police-

man lumbered in pursuit.

Over two roofs they raced thus Then Pierre stubbed his toe and fell over a clothes-prop at the very edge The grabbed triumphantly at him.

But the fallen and supposedly stunned La Rue was not there when the bluecoat's hands sought to close upon his collar. Instead, Pierre was behind him. And

Pierre's fingers had closed on the fat red throat in the finger necklace grip. A few seconds later the policeman ceased his writhings and his body col-lansed. lapsed. Pierre released his hold. The blue-Pierre released his hold. The blue-coat lurched inertly forward across the parapet, toppled by reason of his own weight, and fell over the edge of the airshaft! Whirling around and around in the air he crashed down-ward to the flagstones below.

Harold Stanley, oblivious of the drama enacted overhead, stood star-ing moodily down into the street.

There at the curb was his gray roadster, his chauffeur drowsily at the wheel. Twenty feet in front of it was Dr. Montrose's black touring car, chauffeur reading a red-covered magazine.

Just at the moment Harold saw a man run out from the studio entrance carrying a girl in his arms, shout an order to the black car's chauffeur and lift his burden into the car itself, fol-lowing her as the chauffeur bent for-

ward to press the self-starter.

This much Harold Stanley saw, and he waited to see no more. For he recognized the apparently sleeping girl as Florence Montrose.

Out of the suite he dashed, thrust-

roadster shot forward at a speed that defied every traffic law ever made. In two minutes the black car was

The race had begun. Uptown whizzed the gray car and the black. Straight ahead they flew,

Florence, in terror, sought to remove her glance from his. She could not. Even as the serpent charms the bird into helplessness, so Pierre La ing cars through such ever-thinning traffic as they encountered.

Again and again they barely avoid-ed collision or destruction from slower and larger vehicles. Again and again policemen sprang out to stop them; then shrank back just lin time to escape death, and blasphemously jotted down the racers'

numbers. Inch by inch, as the more open counwas neared, the gray roadster began to creep up on the speeding black In another mile the gray car cut down the distance between itself and

its prey far more rapidly than before.

Harold, leaning far forward at his
chauffeur's side, understood why, for he could hear the black machine's gine begin to "miss," and he knew, bar accidents, the race was his own. The gray roadster in a few minutes more crawled alongside the handi-capped touring car, whose engine now

was all but uscless. falling on his face from the force of his own impetus. But Pierre had vanished through the dressing-room doorboards of the two converging ma-chines; landing with both feet on the black car's running-board, and steadying himself by a left-hand grip on one of the seat arms, he struck fiercely

at Tanner. The latter, in recent memory of his battle with this sledge-hammer hitter. Harold on which Tanner supported the senseless Florence.

Before he could strike again, Tanand ner had jumped out of the rapidly nap. going car, rolled over once in the roadside mud and then scrambled to his feet and set off at a dead run down an adjoining highway. Harold, leaning forward, swung for the head of the black car' driver, who promptly followed

Tanner's example in swarming out over the vehicle's side without ev formality of opening the door. The car, its wheel deserted veered ly to one side. Harold lunged to the seat back and jammed sharply Thee room was empty. The door down the emergency brake. The maleading into the hall was closed. Vanya chine came to a sudden and jarring

halt.
Vainly, Harold sought to revive the senseless girl. At last he lifted her tenderly from the black car and bore her across to his own roadstar "Drive to Dr. Montrose's," he directed his chauffeur. A quarter hour later Harold carried

his fragile burden up the steps of the great Montrose house in Riverdale. footed valet.
"Tell Dr. Montrose his daughter has

her into the library."
"This is no faint," declared Dr. Monstrode across trose. "She is in a hypnotic trance."

"A hypnotic trance?" repeated Harold, incredulously. "It can't be, Look!"

between ashen lips. "I cannot rouse her from it. No medical power on earth can rouse her. She can be

knows you awakened only at the command of the clubwise by the barrel and tensing his muscles for a spring.

But Clayton did not come out into the hall. He stared distressedly after the departed model for an instant, then muttered:

"If I go after her she'll make a scene in the hall just as Florence is seene in the hall just as Florence is that missed Tanner's jaw by barely an an instant. La Rue's plan was made. The bluecoat had not yet seen made. The blue hall had have half was half wa

Then, unexpected as a lightning bolt,

(To Be Continued Next Week.)